

guns by purchasing with the intention of reselling them to prohibited buyers. These straw purchases are often made in States with lax gun safety laws and trafficked to cities where they may later be used in violent crimes. New York City Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly refers to this as the "iron pipeline" of illegal firearms. According to published reports citing New York Police Department statistics, 8 of every 10 guns used in crimes in New York City come from other States. In fact, only 18 percent of the illegal guns recovered in New York City in 2005 were originally sold in New York State, while 61 percent were traced to just five other States.

According to several of the mayors in attendance, the lack of leadership by the President and Congress on the issue of illegal gun trafficking was the impetus for the summit. As New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg pointed out, "There's very little that an individual city can do to halt the sale of guns to criminals. This is a national issue that requires national attention." In the absence of adequate Federal attention, the 15 attending mayors signed a statement of principles resolving, among other things, to work together in the prosecution of gun traffickers, irresponsible gun dealers, and violent criminals.

In their statement of principles, the mayors vow to oppose all Federal efforts to restrict the ability of cities to access, use, and share firearms trace data that can be critical to law enforcement personnel working to stop the flow of guns from reckless gun dealers into the hands of criminals. This statement refers to amendments that have been inserted in the Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Act each of the last 4 years that prohibit the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, ATF, from disclosing important information from the national Firearms Trace System Database to local law enforcement and government officials. Unfortunately, legislation has recently been introduced in the House of Representatives which would make these restrictions on ATF firearms trace data permanent.

It is time that Congress work with, instead of against, our Nation's mayors to solve the gun violence issues which our communities face. The mayors are right. The gun violence epidemic across the country requires national attention, and I urge my colleagues to join me in working to enact common-sense gun safety laws that will help keep guns out of the hands of criminals.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of this statement of principles be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MAYORS' SUMMIT ON ILLEGAL GUNS

Whereas: 30,000 Americans across the country are killed every year as a result of gun violence, destroying families and communities in big cities and small towns; and

Whereas: As Mayors, we are duty-bound to do everything in our power to protect our residents, especially our children, from harm and there is no greater threat to public safety than the threat of illegal guns;

Now, therefore, we resolve to work together to find innovative new ways to advance the following principles:

Punish to the maximum extent of the law—criminals who possess, use, and traffic in illegal guns.

Target and hold accountable irresponsible gun dealers who break the law by knowingly selling guns to straw purchasers.

Oppose all federal efforts to restrict cities' right to access, use, and share trace data that is so essential to effective enforcement, or to interfere with the ability of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms to combat illegal gun trafficking.

Work to develop and use technologies that aid in the detection and tracing of illegal guns.

Support all local, state, and federal legislation that targets illegal guns; coordinate legislative, enforcement, and litigation strategies; and share information and best practices.

Invite other cities to join us in this new national effort.

IN CELEBRATION OF ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to recognize Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

Please join me as we celebrate the outstanding contributions of Asian Pacific Americans to our Nation during Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. Since 1977, when Congressman Norman Mineta of San Jose, along with Senators DANIEL INOUE and Spark Matsunaga of Hawaii, introduced a joint congressional resolution, we have celebrated Asian Pacific American—APA—cultures and traditions each May. They chose May for the observance because the first Japanese settlers had come to mainland America in May 1843, and the Nation's first transcontinental railroad was completed, with the help of Chinese American labor, in May 1869. This year, the theme is "Celebrating Decades of Pride, Partnerships and Progress."

More than 14 million APAs live in the United States. Nearly 5 million APAs live in California, making it home to the largest population of Asian Pacific Americans in the Nation. It is no wonder, then, that the APA community in California has made tremendous strides by working together to bring about positive change and growth. I am so proud of my State of California for being a leader on Asian Pacific American issues.

Earlier this year, the California State Legislature's Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus held its 6th Annual APA Legislative Briefing, "Partnering for Community Empowerment." The conference brought together statewide APA community leaders—from organizations such as the Asian Pacific Islanders California Action Network, Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum, and Asian

Americans for Civil Rights and Equality—to create unique partnerships to advance civil rights, education, health care and community development. I commend the Asian Pacific Islander Caucus and California's APA community leaders for their tireless and innovative efforts to empower Asian Pacific Americans in California.

In addition to reflecting on the many accomplishments of the APA community, Asian Pacific American Heritage Month also allows us to honor the memory and contributions of notable Asian Pacific Americans. This year, sadly, we have lost many APA leaders: Dave Tatsuno, a courageous man who secretly documented life in a Japanese American internment camp during World War II; Sam Chu Lin, one of the first Asian American journalists in the United States; Judge Delbert Wong, the first Chinese American judge in the continental United States; and Jade Snow Wong, a world-renowned author and ceramicist.

All four of these APA leaders were undeterred in their efforts to make America a better place to live, and they will be missed by all who knew them. In remembering the accomplishments of Dave Tatsuno, Sam Chu Lin, Judge Delbert Wong, and Jade Snow Wong, I hope that future APAs will be inspired to become leaders who will fight for this great Nation and for the rights of all Asian Pacific Americans.

As we celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month this May, let us remember that Asian Pacific Americans are constantly contributing to every aspect of American life, from business and government to sports, science, and the arts. As we note their many contributions, let us celebrate diversity and recommit ourselves to working together toward a better future for us all.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, this month marks the anniversary of two milestones in Asian Pacific American history.

The first-ever Japanese Americans made their home in this country starting on May 7, 1843. And in this same month in 1869, the Transcontinental Railroad, which had a tremendous impact on settling the West, was completed largely due to the hard labor of hundreds of Chinese Americans.

These landmarks in Asian Pacific American history inspired Congress in 1977 to pass legislation establishing a week in May as Asian/Pacific Heritage Week. In 1990, it was expanded into a month-long observation.

So this May, in recognition of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, I honor the diverse cultures and heritages that make up the Asian and Pacific Islander American communities in my own home State of Maryland and across the Nation. I recognize the adversity and discrimination so many have faced and continue to face in America, and I vow to continue to fight